

Teachers' Guide



Goal:

As pointed out in the "Mission", the goal of this lesson is to study the experience of children during World War II, and in particular child evacuees who were on board *SS City of Benares*.

Approach:

Students are placed in the historical context of a virtual investigation. In all aspects of the inquiry, students are guided in the study, questioning, analysis, and evaluation of a key event in history, based upon authentic historical sources.

For teaching purposes, students are invited to analyze historical sources through a set of sourcing questions that facilitates their understanding and analysis. These questions/answers will also serve in the writing of report in which they have to explain what happened and determine if the tragedy for avoidable in the circumstances.

The article provides students with an authentic, practical venue to present a historical perspective on this World War II tragedy. The article should include the following elements:

- (1) Introduction with context of the event (sinking of *SS City of Benares*);
- (2) historical perspectives (social, political, military) on World War II and its impact on civilians and children;
- (3) experiences of passengers and child evacuees on board *SS City Benares* ship; and
- (4) summary which reaffirms the position of the author.

Methods:

The investigation can be done using three different approaches:

- (1) Individual project with personal computer,
- (2) Team work with one or multiple computer(s); and
- (3) Class-based project with teacher's directed instructions with smart board

Given the nature of the inquiry and accommodations for students' learning,



teachers can also orient them by limiting the number of sources to be used in the course of the investigation.

Sources :

Even if there is no simple and unique model in history to research and analyze historical sources, the sources included in this comprehensive case are presented according to their level of importance for carrying out the investigation. These three levels (also presented in the Virtual Historian) are:

**First-order:
(initial)**

Timeline (chronology of events)
 Maps of (a) the voyage of SS City of Benares, and (b) the various ships sunk by German naval forces
 Excerpt from *Iron Coffins: A personal account of the German U-boat*
 Excerpt from *Miracles on the Water: The Heroic Survivors of a World War II U-Boat Attack*

Second-order:

Excerpt of radio address given by Dr. R.C. Wallace (chairman of the National Committee for Children from Overseas)
 Correspondence between the Childrens Overseas Reception Board and the Myatt family
 Letter to Beryl Myatt from her mother and father
 Account of Michael Rennie's death by Louis Walder
 Kenneth John Sparks Oral history

Third-order:

Battle of the Atlantic, Historical Factsheet
 Canada in the Second World War, The Battle of the Atlantic
 Historical photographs of the event
 Newsreels produced after the event
 "Extra resources" provided to students in the library



Evaluation:

The student evaluation for this case is found in the rubrics presented at the end of the "Mission". The specific rubrics (French and English) can be downloaded and printed.

The evaluation places the emphasis on the following competencies, as developed in the activity:

- Describe Canada's and Canadians' contribution to World War II efforts;
- Understand the contexts (social, political, military) of children's wartime experience;
- Adopt a historical perspective of World War II child evacuees (inference about they thought and felt);
- Select and analyze critically multiple historical sources;
- Use historical and critical thinking processes;
- Apply key concepts to historical inquiry;
- Express ideas, arguments, and conclusions using appropriate style and supporting evidence; and
- Use of information and communication technology (ICT) in every step of the investigation.

Tools

To facilitate the work of students with primary sources, scaffolding sheets (organizers) are offered to them in the "Tools" section. Students also have additional information on the concept of causation in the "Document" section. Students are also encouraged to take personal notes in their online "Note book". Teacher's documents on scaffolding historical thinking and literacy are provided to you below.

For a better understanding of the concepts of "historical perspective" and "historical empathy" in history, refer to the following documents from [The Historical Thinking Project](#)